2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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when the mosquitoes are really bad the cattle are tied for the night in the open, generally in the centre of the village. Fires of dried cow-dung are kept smouldering all night, and the herdsmen smear themselves with the ashes. In the dry season when the grass gives out the young men and boys drive the cattle long distances to fresh pastures; the Shilluk of the White Nile cross to the eastern bank, those of the Sobat migrate to the lagoons to the south of Sobat.

Fish are speared and trapped, and the hippopotamus, the flesh of which is greatly esteemed, is harpooned. The Shilluk, who are by no means expert trackers, hunt by surrounding an area and spearing the animals as they attempt to escape from the contracting circle, but game procured in this manner plays only a small part in their diet.

The Shilluk are excellent craftsmen. The thatching of the royal shrines and those of Nyakang is perhaps the best in the riverain portion of the Sudan, and this applies equally to their iron work, though they do not extract the metal from the ore but obtain it by trade—formerly from the Dinka, now from the white man. Their spears are the best that we saw in the southern Sudan. There is no special group of smiths, and iron-workers are not despised. They make good but not remarkable pottery. Their dug-out canoes are necessarily small, as the only wood is the *doleib* palm (*Borassus flabellifer*). In the north, where other wood is available in small quantities, the sides of the canoe are commonly heightened by built-on strips; possibly this practice is modern, but it is not absolutely new, as we noted it more than twenty years ago. Besides canoes, the Shilluk make small rafts of ambatch which resemble the reed rafts of the ancient Egyptians.

Regulation of Public Life

The Shilluk king is absolute head—temporal and spiritual—of a state whose territory is divided into a number of provinces, each administered by a chief directly responsible to the sovereign and acting as his proxy. We are indebted to Mr. Heasty for the following account of the areas into which the country is divided. The two main divisions are Lwak and Gar. The former comprises all the country south of and including the capital Fashoda, with its provincial capital Kwom, and here resides one of the great territorial chiefs mentioned

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

292 535 301 a great dance. I have noted the ornaments and clothings worn by the young men and girls on the occasion. They are *a)* for the men: above the ankles a strip of sheep or goat skin with the hair on it outside; the same just below the knee; above it are the knee-bells, a number of metal bells each consisting in a hollow, oblong piece of iron, in which a small iron ball moves, thus producing a rattling noise; about the loins there is a skin of leopard, gepard, wild cat, or jackal, suspended on a eight to twelve-fold girdle of ostrich egg shells; the girdle may also consist of European beads; on the wrist a bracelet of brass or iron, above the elbow an ivory ring, above it a six- to eight-fold ring of ambach; about the neck they wear one or more necklaces of beads; on the head ornaments of horse-tail or other long hair, and ostrich feathers; round the forehead strips of red or white bristles are fastened; each man holds two lances, two clubs, one club-shield, the lances generally being adorned with ostrich-plumes; sometimes the skin-cloth round the waist is adorned with bells or iron chains. Face, [302] arms, and the upper part of the body are smeared with red earth, over wich melted butter is poured and stripes of ashes are drawn. Several, if not all, of the dancers carry a dancing-stick, a long stick, bent at its upper end like the handle of a walking stick, and covered with brass or some other metal. *b)* The girls present the following appearance: above the ankles a bundle of heavy iron rings, on the loins a large antelope- or more frequently calf-skin suspended by a bundle of ostrich egg shell chains; round the neck and hanging down on the breasts a large bundle of blue or green beads; on the wrists bracelets of beads; round the forehead a string of beads; the hair is sometimes dressed on the occasion; in the hair an ostrich or some other good feather is stuck, in one or two cases I saw even flowers instead of a feather; the girls are not painted, only anointed with oil.

301 The most characteristic adornments of the men are thick, heavy bracelets and armlets of iron, brass, ivory, twisted ambach, tree-bark, and cowrie shells. A wreath consisting of a strip of skin with the hair on the outside is laid round the head. Rings of metal, ambach, cowrie or bark are worn above the ankle. Women and girls also wear armlets, but not ivory ones. The legs below the knee are loaded with heavy metal rings. Men as well as women, but chiefly [304] the latter, pierce their ears at the top, and wear rings of brass or iron in them; sometimes merely a piece of metal or a stick is fastened in them. Both sexes wear strings of ostrich egg shells about the loins; besides these chains of cowries, of river shells, of leather, and of varied beads are frequent. Many grown-up men and youths wear a necklace of a peculiar kind of small, well-shaped, and ● 439 marble-like stones, which have about the size of a pigeon-egg; they are very much valued, and the natives always ask an ox in exchange for them. These

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

stones are collected by the Arabs of Kordofan about the numerous mountains there. The amount of labour required to work them into the proper shape accounts for their high value, as well as their scarcity among the Shilluks.

A Shilluk man hardly leaves his home without carrying a spear or two, and a club. They have two kinds of spears, one whose blade has the form of a laurel-leaf, another with a cylindric blade, ending in a sharp point, the surface being either smooth or barbed. The shafts are of common wood without any ornaments. The spears often have a tuft of short ostrich feathers or of wool, near the butt. The cylindrical (round) spears are used not only as arms, but also in fishing. Besides the spears, they have two species of clubs, at least one of which a man always carries with him. One is simply a thick stick about one meter long, and heavy at one end. The other is about two feet and a half long, made in one solid piece of hard, heavy wood, with a big round knob at one end.

The Shilluks are a haughty, proud people. They are much inclined to consider themselves and everything belonging to them as superior to the strangers, including the white men. "The things of the Shilluks are good, and the things of the strangers are bad", is a common saying among them. They do not in any way want the foreigners and their mode of life. This strong disinclination is not only due to their innate character, but also to the evil experiences they have had with Arabs, Turks, Abyssinians, the Dervishes etc.

The well-founded feeling of suspicion and even of contempt for white people will grow less intensive or may disappear altogether in consequence of the peaceful intercourse they now have with the representatives of the white race. In conversing with a white man they at the best treat him as their equal, but hardly ever as their superior. It requires therefore considerable tact to deal with them. Once having gained confidence they are frank, open-minded, and always ready for a joke, but they are also quickly offended.

As warriors the Shilluks are brave; they make excellent soldiers in colonial troops, and are renowned as the best soldiers in the Sudan; generally they become really attached to their leaders, whether white or black.

Working for the white man is done only in times of dearth, when no food is obtainable in other ways. But in spite of this difficulty the mission has, during the last few years, had remarkable results in educating the natives to regular voluntary work. — If one sees a Shilluk standig for an hour or longer almost without ever moving, except now and then scratching his head or chewing his tooth-stick, or if one meets them lying in the ashes of the village place for hours together, one might believe them to be an extremely lazy people. But this would be only partly right. Indeed during the dry season they have not much work

439 ●

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3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

A list of craftsmen and their trade vide page 105. A few words may be added here on some particular crafts. They have skilful blacksmiths; these make spears, hoes, axes, harpoons, picks, arm-rings of brass and of iron, bells, chains. Their handicraft, which is carried on chiefly during the dry season, is a travelling one; they take their tools and go about from one place to another. While among the Dinkas the blacksmiths are considered a low, despised class of people, who live separate from the villages in the bush, with the Shilluks they are respected persons, and accordingly their pay is good. The employer has to support the blacksmith working for him, and pays him a sheep beside. Iron is not found in the Shilluk country. Previous to the opening up of the country to the traders the iron secured by the Shilluks came from the Dinkas and Nuers, who seemed to buy it from the natives of the Upper Nile regions (Jurs, Bongos), where iron is smelted; some may also have come from Darfur through Kordofan. In recent years, however, nearly all of it is procured from the north, and is of European origin. A remarkable proof of the growing willingness on the side of the natives to work for wages is the fact that during the last two years the American missionaries have introduced and sold to the natives some thirteen tons of raw iron, together with a great number of good iron tools, as axes, etc. Not only the raw material, but even the finished articles of native manufacture are gradually being replaced by European imports. Their good spears are still made by their own blacksmiths, but many cheap spears are bought from the traders; so are their crude axes, mattocks and hoes. Iron bracelets and other ornaments are made by their blacksmiths from iron rods. If the rod is too large, it is heated and beaten out. Whatever the Shilluk blacksmith makes, is superior to the imported article that he gets from the Arab or Greek trader. It may be mentioned that the word *bɔ̄ɡɔ*, which means originally and properly "blacksmith", has also the wider sense of "craftsman", and has become a designation for all other crafts they practise. BLACKSMITHS

An important craft is that of the thatch-maker. The roofs of the Shilluk houses are of a peculiarly neat description. While the Dinkas generally leave the roof with the appearance of being unfinished, the grass not being smoothed down and cut at the ends, the Shilluk thatcher makes his thatch with a neatness which really excites admiration. The framework of the roof is always made on the ground and placed on the circular wall like a great conical cap. OTHER CRAFTS

Plaiting is pratised by both sexes. Men make the large, coarse mats for enclosing yards, and also the large grain baskets. Women plait small fancy mats for covering food, and also very nice small coloured baskets, sieves, etc.

Most of the men make their own ostrich shell girdles. The shells are first broken into irregular pieces, which are pierced in the center with an awl-

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

323 mostly consisting of ring-shaped lines with dots in them. The pipe-stem is a
276 long, thick, hollow reed of about 1½—2 cm in diameter. The juncture be-
531 tween the stick and the head is tightly closed with a leather cover. On the upper end of the stick a small, oblong gourd with a pointed head is fastened; here again the juncture is made tight by a leather cover wrapped about it. Along the stick four or five strings are fastened, by which the pipe is carried; a long, pointed stick for cleaning the pipe is tied to the stem with a string. They are
276 exceedingly fond of smoking, both men and women. The smoking materials is a little tobacco and much charcoal. The pipe being rather heavy, they usually sit
[516] down, bowing their head deep over the pipe while smoking. When sitting in a circle they take only one or two draughts, and after that hand the pipe over to their neighbour. — Tobacco is not only smoked, but also chewed passionately; this habit is more common among women and girls than among men.

SMOKING AND CHEWING OF TOBACCO

756 In cases of sickness the doctor is called. His chief means of curing consists
758 in charms, but they also know some reasonable medicines, among which cutting stands in the first place; but although they inflict much pain, they often heal a sickness. — Sick people are nursed by their relatives with care; temporary residences are fixed for them by screening off a place in the yard.

463 Building houses, making fences, dressing skins, working neck supports, carving and polishing clubs and spear sticks, making ambach boats and other common work is understood by every Shilluk. The neck supports are "invented
352 by Nyikang." They are carved of wood, and are made to resemble the forms
[532] of animals, viz. of hippopotamus, giraffe, tiang, camel, ostrich and another bird, which seems to be an ibis. The Shilluks have no chairs or stools; old men sometimes sit on a piece of ambach wood, young people squat or lie on the ground.

NECK SUPPORTS

463 The craftsmen do not practise their trade with the exclusion of all other kind of work; each one of them cultivates his farm and tends his cattle, and only during the time there is no farm-work, he works at his craft.

438 There are villages which are renowned in practising certain crafts; some in fishing or hunting, some in cattle-breeding or cultivating dura, some in making pots or baskets, etc. As these goods are exchanged between the villages, a little
[443] trade is going on; but in this trade among the natives no money is used, and it is practised only occasionally; they have no markets. The very little development of trade is illustrated by the expression used for it: *agwo*, which means "to sell" as well as "to buy"; all trade being done by barter, selling and buying are identical actions; the native cannot "buy" anything without at the same time
439 "selling" another thing; he exchanges one thing for another. In trading with
177 the Arab or Greek merchant they have, however, learnt the use of money;

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

here articles of purchase and sale are calculated in silver currency.

The daily work of the women is cooking, carrying water, cleaning the house and yard, etc. During the time of farmwork they help the men in cultivating the fields.

FOOD

The staple food is dura. It is cooked, baked into a bread (*kwon*), roasted, brewed and, when green, eaten raw. For different kinds of food vide page 102. Their diet is rather monotonous, dura being its constant chief component. The dura is pounded and ground. The mortar is either a log of wood hollowed out, or a flat excavation in the ground, lined out with clay. The mill-stones — a large and a small one, with the latter the grinding is done — are secured from districts west of the Shilluk country. — Fire is made by twirling a hard stick on a soft piece of wood.

Besides dura they eat sesame, duchn, maize, beans, some onions, various grass seeds, the seeds of the lotus plant and of some kinds of nymphaeae. The fruit of several trees, as deleib, nabag, etc. also serve as food; they even rob ant hills to procure the winter store of hoarded seeds. White ants, when in the winged state, are a delicacy to them. — Milk is used in the household in many ways: it is drunk fresh, sour, or boiled, or dura meals are prepared with it. They also make butter, by shaking or rolling the milk in a gourd. — As domestic animals are almost never slain, meat forms no part of the daily food, but is rather an exceptional delicacy, which is, however, sought for with eagerness; of game they hardly leave any piece uneaten, skin and bowels not excepted; they do not even despise dead animals. The blood of killed animals is kept and cooked, but they do not tap the blood from living cattle, as is the custom with the Bari and Masai. — Generally they prefer the meat of castrated animals.

Two chief meals are taken daily; one from nine to ten in the morning, and the second at sunset.

BREWING OF BEER

A large quantity of the dura the people reap is used in cooking merisa or beer. The grain is put into jars and water poured on it. Thus it is left till the grain begins to sprout. Then it is spread in the sun to dry, and then pounded or ground; this wet meal is mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put a second time into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on it; the jars are covered with small mats and allowed to remain a day or two, until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week. Though this drink is slightly intoxicating, it does not seem to do great harm; it is very nourishing, and the natives regard it rather as a food than a beverage.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

retreat. Around our house they went in a regular stampede, and forming in a line again in front of the house for another charge.
This they repeated a number of times. Then a crowd of women, who had followed their husbands and sweethearts to battle, acted the part of foe, only to be overcome by the brave warriors and driven back. This part was very amusing. One old body with great bravery marched out and charged, using her pipe as her weapon. The men were a bit rough in driving her back, and she was evidently afraid her dear pipe would come to grief, so she took it inside our house and when next we saw her she was in the thick of a fray with a long weed as her weapon of offence and defence".]

The dry season is also the time for travelling. Relatives pay mutual visits, and marriageable young men go to the Nuers and Dinkas with spears, wire, stuffs, and dura, which they exchange for sheep and calves.

IV. RELIGION.

In the religion of the Shilluks three components ary clearly distinguishable: 1. Jwok *(jwɔ̀k)* or God; 2. Nyikang *(Ñ(kàñì)*, the progenitor and national hero of the Shilluks; 3. ajwogo *(àjwɔ̄gó)*, the witch doctor or sorcerer. These three do not exist separate from each other, but have many relations amongst one another. There are still other forms of religious service, but they are not so prominent as the three mentioned.

"Jwok *(jwɔ̀k)* is a supreme being, residing above". Whether he is regarded as creator is not sure. According to the sayings of some natives he surely is, but it seems probable that this belief, if there is such a one, is young, and must be traced back to Mohammedan or Christian influences. — On certain occasions an ox is killed as a sacrifice to Jwok, though this is done more frequently to Nyikang; prayers are also offered to Jwok, but according to my information, they have only one prayer to Jwok (for which vide page 171), while to Nyikang there are many. "Praying" to Jwok is expressed by a different word from that which serves for designating a prayer to Nyikang; the first is *lāmɔ* "to pray"; its original meaning is probably: to conjure. In praying to Nyikang *kwachɔ* "to ask for, to beg" is used. While the prayers to Nyikang are sung, and accompanied by dances, that one to Jwok is only spoken, not sung, and not accompanied by dancing. Jwok has no visible symbols or temples, nor are the prayers to him offered by a priest or sorcerer, but by the chief or village-elder.

In the heart and mind of the Shilluk Jwok does not possess a deep-rooted rank. In some way they do attribute good and evil to him, and chiefly the

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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766 [778] homestead, including the stockade, is the form of all tombs of Shilluk *reths*, and also of the numerous shrines of Nyikang which are scattered throughout the country. Outside the tomb a temporary semi-circular screen had been erected, and against this the banners of the divisions were leant and also the spears of the deceased. At the end of the ceremonies the horns of the bulls which were sacrificed were hung upon this screen.

The preliminary day of the funeral dance was confined to Shilluk chiefs. It was said to be a "dance of swords", and only the spears of the late *reth*, about thirty in number and carried by his widows, were brought at all. Those who possessed them carried swords, most [411 727] of which had been captured from the Dervishes or the Turks, or bought from Arab merchants [439]. The sword is not a Shilluk weapon, and it is probable that they were produced on this occasion to express the [177 648] anti-Dervish nature of the ceremonies, an attitude of mind which was emphasized by the Shilluk songs of hate against the Dervishes, which on this day and later were sung at frequent intervals. It is difficult to say why the funeral dance of the *reth* has associations with their struggles with the Dervishes, but it may be connected with those Shilluk *reths* who were killed in battle, hanged or died in captivity. The dances are public, and, apart from the funereal aspect of the ceremonies, the defensive unity of the tribe against outside aggression must be made apparent. The tribe is without a *reth*, who is the symbol of their unity, and such occasions call for a dramatization of their co-operation against external enemies. Those who had no swords carried millet stalks, which they plucked from the fences in the village.

At four in the afternoon, the Kwanyikir, after they had set up the drums, (Note 5), walked in procession round them in an anti-clockwise direction, while the dancers began to collect in the centre of the village. After a short interval, a white bull was speared, and the carcase was handed over to the Kwanyikir as a reward for their service. The

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

512 pounding and grinding the flour in preparation for the evening meal. Some of them will go off to the neighbouring [439] forest to collect firewood to sell to the mission, or they will gather some of the small eggs their undersized hens produce and take them to the Sisters to sell or exchange for a little oil or salt or cloth.

So the day passes: the village drowses under the fierce heat of midday and afternoon, but comes to life again as evening approaches. The men return from the river bringing the results of their day's labour, a few stout cow ropes, a new doormat, or a string of fish to supplement the supplies for the evening meal. The cattle stream in again and are tied up and milked by the boys, the dried cow dung is collected into heaps and set on fire and soon a cloud of thick, acrid smoke drifts low over the village. Fires begin to twinkle through the gathering dusk as preparations are made in the various [262] compounds for the cooking of supper—boiled millet flour again with perhaps the addition of a little fish. The moon is nearly full and by the time supper is finished is sailing high in the heavens, lighting up the village with silvery brilliance.

512 535 It is the invitation to the dance. A huge fire is lighted in the middle of the dancing floor, the drums are brought out and —on with the dance. Food is plentiful at present and the fishing has been good of late, so they dance because they are happy. Or perhaps food is scarce and there is no fish to be had, and supper has been meagre, or even non-existent. They dance just the same to try to forget their emptiness and misery. Any excuse will suffice, or no excuse at all. The tom-toms begin to throb, boy faces girl, and the dance begins. The booming of the drums and the yelling of the dancers, assisted by a gentleman who winds the same three [533] notes on a kudu horn with maddening persistency, defeat all attempts at sleep in the mission half a mile away. We thump our wet pillows and call down blessings on the merrymakers. The revels continue far into the night, but at last, about midnight, even the Shilluk have had enough and, exhausted, crawl into their huts to sleep. Silence falls on the place, but it is shortly broken by the mournful howl of a prowling hyena.

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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463 stalks of millet, binding them together with ropes which he
824 makes of grass. The same grass provides him with the
[283] thatch for the roof, mats for his door, ropes of varying strength to tether his goats and cattle, and a rope of great thickness and strength to assist him in the dangerous sport of hunting the hippopotamus. From reeds gathered by the riverside he weaves grain baskets and fish traps. If a cow of
463 his falls sick he can act as a veterinary doctor, and if he fails
[232] to effect a cure for the animal, he is quite competent at least to cure its hide! He makes his own pottery, beautifully
[323] symmetrical and balanced, without the aid of a wheel, and fires it in an earth oven, and grows the calabashes which
[415] provide him with drinking bowls. He can turn his hand to
[294] shoemaking, fashioning a clumsy but serviceable sandal from
[237] hippopotamus hide and cow skin by using his spear blade very cleverly as both knife and awl. When his work is done he will fill his home-made pipe with tobacco he has grown and cured himself and gratefully drink the beer that his able wife has brewed for him. There are, naturally, some among them who are more gifted than others, or who show a special aptitude in some particular craft and therefore specialize in it. Thus, a Shilluk householder who wishes to have a superior type of thatching on his house will call in an expert to do it; yet such experts are comparatively few, because they are unnecessary in a community where each one is brought up to do everything for himself, and has no other work to prevent him from living a communal tribal life in full. The one craft that is completely exercised by a special few is that
[326] of the blacksmith, and this because ironwork is so small a need in the life of the Shilluk. It is true that his two spears
[411] and the small hoe he uses for cultivation are indispensable
[412] to him, but once he acquires them they last a lifetime, and it would be a waste for him to collect the—to him—elaborate and expensive tools of the blacksmith's trade for which he would seldom, or never, have use. If ever he
[437] needs a new spear or hoe he will, by buying or bartering,
[439] obtain it from the local smith, or—as is more likely in these modern days—make his way to the nearest Arab

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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or Greek merchant and purchase one imported from England.

The most important and busiest months in the Shilluk year are those of the rainy season, from June to November. When the first rains fall, the villagers go out to prepare their fields for planting. The main plantations are generally at a considerable distance from the village, sometimes as much as ten miles inland; the small patches of maize and millet around the villages, usually cultivated by the women, are for a quick crop that can be used as soon as it is ripe. After the first few showers the grass is burnt and the ashes left to be washed into the soil. When enough rain has fallen to soften the ground, planting begins. There is no preliminary back-breaking hoeing or digging; the Shilluk would regard as crazy anyone who would suggest that such a thing was necessary or would improve the land. He would say that if the rains are good and all other circumstances favourable to growth, he will get enough grain to last him for the year, whereas if fortune is adverse, all the digging in the world will not fill his store basket. What was good enough for his fathers away back to the time of Nyikang is good enough for him; why should he try to improve on the wisdom of the ancients? If this particular patch was sufficient for his father and his father's father, why should he go to the trouble of clearing another? One of the Fathers in Lul, an expert and enthusiastic farmer, tried to convert the schoolboys to a better system of farming by showing them the benefits of digging and manuring the land. He divided an area of ground into two equal parts, planting one half according to the Shilluk and the other according to his own improved method; yet even the sight of the bumper crop that he obtained failed to impress the boys: it was not the Shilluk way of doing things and therefore not for them. And so, the husbandman with a sharp pointed stick removes a small divot from the unbroken surface, drops in a few millet seeds and pushes back the soil with his heel as he moves on. When the whole field has been sown in this manner, he is content to sit back and leave the rest to the beneficence of Nyikang,